









Offers of armed force came from every section of the State. They were made in carnest; for they came from men who were inflamed by a long and bitter political fight, and from men outraged by the thought of the assassination. To them all Lea replied that further bloodshed must be avoided, and that the law would attend to its own business. It was significant that at such a time the grizzled mountaineers and the experienced business men of the cities appealed for the final word to the young publisher.

But he got another message that night. It came from the Patterson camp and said, "If you refer in your paper tomorrow to this thing as a murder or an assassination, we'll shoot you and burn down your newspaper plant."

THEN, in the course of time, there came the necessity for electing another Gov-ernor or neelecting Patterson. Again the State of Tennessee boiled into a section po-Think, in the course of chack and the the necessity for electing another Governor or neelecting Patterson. Again the State of Tennessee boiled into a seething political mess. When the steam had cleared away Patterson had withdrawn "for the sake of party welfare." The Democrats, the "oldline" members of the party, had nominated Fiddling Bob Taylor as their last chance. And Lea, working mightily for his "progressive" politics, had effected a fusion between the Republicans and the "progressive" Democrats and had put the merger back of Ben W. Hooper, a Republican and the product of an orphan asylum.

Lea did this because, having beaten Patterson out of a renomination, he wanted to put all the Patterson crowd out of office. Hooper won. Not even the beloved personality and the wide popularity of Fiddling Bob could withstand the terrific strength of the Lea-Hooper organization. This happened last fall.

At the Top of the Tower

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Now comes the last chapter of the story. The State Legislature met to choose a United States Senator to succeed James B. Frazier. There followed a deadlock of three weeks, during which the "regular" Democrats had as their leading candidates the tried old warriors Luke Wright and Benton McMillin, and the Fusionists, Republicans, and "progressive" Democrats were backing Frazier and Enloe. The fighting was hard, and it was about as easy to change a vote as it was an airy and slight thing for Mahomet to make the mountain come galloping to his lordly feet. The deadlock occurred in that same legislative hall which had witnessed the young man spring wildly to the dais and seize the gavel that put him into control of the first Patterson convention.

At ten o'clock the morning of January 23 last, Lea refused to allow his name to be put up for the senatorship. With all his strength and aggressiveness, he is a modest man. Up to that day, he had never been a candidate for any office, nor had he ever allowed himself or his family to be mentioned in any way in the columns of his newspaper. At eleven to clock of the twenty-third, three weeks after the beginning of the deadlock, while he was in the legislative hall. Stanley Trezevant of Shelby nominated him for the high honor. Trezevant had roomed with him at the University of the South; but, up to that time, had voted for the regular Democratic nominees. It took but one hallot to wrest victory from the stagnation of the deadlock. On the first count it was seen, even before official I announcement had been made, that Lea had won. The galleries and the floor of the hall were througed to their uttermost capacity; of the news had spread that Lea was carry-to the news had spread that Lea was

came the killing of Carmack by the Coopers, within a week after Patterson's reelection.

Here again young Mr. Thunderbolt took a long leap up the Tower. Carmack was shot down in the late afternoon. That night Tennessee, in valley and on mountainside, in town and in country, was a powder magazine which needed only a spark to set it off in an explosion of violence that might have reached a state of anarchy. From dark until the rest handlere hier bandlere hier and let them flutter into the next memory. One man three a campstool at the presiding officer. The outburst was beyond control. The roar and power of it lifted young Mr. Thunderbolt to his position of ease on top of

the Tower.

Such is a casual review of what has been accomplished by Luke Lea since he left his law school a little less than eight years ago. The explanation of his achievements lies in his optimism, his strength, his love of right and his daring.

Power of His Fists

SOON after Carmack had been killed, the Legislature was considering a prohibition amendment. Lea was for it, for it with all his heart and soul. By ceaseless work he lined up a majority of two in favor of the measure. The night before the vote was to be taken he heard that two of his followers had been bought out and would go over to the other side. In an hour he had assembled his

other side. In an hour he had assembled his little army.

"Gentlemen," he said calmly, "I have been told that two of you have sold out to the opposition. I cannot believe it. I do not believe it. But I will say this: If anyhody goes back on his pledge tomorrow, I will bear him black and blue with my bare fists," And they all stayed "put."

Lea is not a "gun toter." He has gone through troubbous times in Tennessee, times when men not only threatened the lives of each other, but when actual murder was done. He has received threats and anonymous letters by the score; but he never carried any armor save that of his steady eye and his two fists.

His one, broad platform has been enforcement of the haw and the provise that, if new laws were needed, new laws must be made. He has never countenanced going beyond

ment of the law and the provise that, if new laws were needed, new laws must be made. He has never countenanced going beyond the law; but he has had some hot times having new legislation put through. His two great weapons have been his newspaper and his genius for organization. But, when occasion demands, he can make a great speech. He can fill his sentences with fire, brimstone, and battleaxes, or he can put into his utterances the purling sweetness of the mountain brooks and the tales that are told by the light and fragrant winds of spring.

But oratory is not the chief weapon needed when a young man charges the breastworks of political organization that is intrenched behind precedent, armed with the experience of tried politicians, and equipped with the patronage power of a State. Such a fight is won by action and organization, knowledge of human nature and an appreciation of the value of the psychological moment. All these things are possessed in remarkable degree by young Mr. Thunderboit.

His Biography

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L UKE LEA was born April 12, 1879, near Nashville, Tennessee. He entered the University of the South at Sewance in 1896, and was graduated in 1900. In June, 1903, he was graduated from the Columbia Law School, New York city, and that same summer was admitted to the Nashville bar. He comes from the distinguished Lea and Overton families, and is wealthy in his own right. He is married and has two children.

His grandfather, Luke Lea, served in Congress with Millard Fillmore, who was afterward elected President. Another grandfather, Judge Overton, was a venerable authority to whom Theodore Roosevelt often appealed for advice on affairs touching Tennessee.

Young Mr. Thunderbolt will not be thirty-two years old until April 12. He is at an age when most young men think they are doing well if they are elected to the State Legislature or are made prosecuting attorneys for their counties. He has broken up what was thought to be a solidly intrenched party machine, and is the youngest man ever elected to the United States Senate. Other men, far back in the history of the country, were appointed at a slightly younger age to serve out unexpired terms; but he is the youngest ever elected to the upper house of Congress. oungest ever elected to the upper house of

Congress.

A friend of his once said, "If Luke Lea told
A friend of his once said, in the afternoon A friend of his once said, "If Luke Lea told me that at three o'clock in the afternoon three weeks from today he would bring the Emperor of China into Nashville and would have him bound hand and foot and singing a coon song, I'd be at the railroad station confident of seeing the Emperor come in trussed up like a chicken."

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